

Washington

..at..

Valley Forge

A Drama

By

Rev. W. Herbert Burk







# Washington at Valley Forge

A D R A M A

BY

REV. W. HERBERT BURK



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

General Washington.	Miss Ambrozene Squeezem.	} Twins.
Lady Washington.	Miss Imogene Squeezem.	
Marquis Lafayette.	Dolly Pendleton.	
Baron von Steuben.	Ruth, an army nurse.	
Gen. Wayne.	Guard.	
Mrs. Wayne.	Pat.	
General Knox.	Joshua.	
Mrs. Knox, a bride.	Jack.	
Major Richardson.	Hannah, the maid of Mrs. Potts.	
Isaac Potts.	Servant of Mrs. Squeezem.	
Martha Potts, his wife.	Mrs. Lamb, Mrs. Smallwood, Mrs. Poor,	
Mrs. Squeezem.	and Mrs. Huntington.	

Officers, soldiers, ladies, and the children of Valley Forge.

Costumes of the Period.

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# WASHINGTON AT VALLEY FORGE.

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## ACT I.

### SCENE I.

The road in front of the present Washington Memorial Chapel. Wooded background. Snow on ground. Night.

Guard—A step! Someone comes. Halt! Friend or foe?

Major Richardson—A friend.

Guard—Advance three paces and give the countersign.

Major Richardson advances, and whispers "Liberty."

Guard recognizes his officer and salutes.

Major Richardson—Another bitter night. It's hard work throwing up the entrenchments, and the pickets must be watchful. A troop of horse was seen in the direction of the Gulph. They may try to pass here to-night. Discharge your gun at the first sign of danger. Remember that the General orders of yesterday declare pickets shall be shot who fail to watch. Ah, it's a bitter night. (Walks across the stage and off L.)

(Guard slowly paces his beat and peers from time to time down the road. Stoops to listen). My how the wind blows! A poor fellow has no chance in this place. And the redcoats are having a gay time in Philadelphia. My, I'm cold. This gun is colder than ice. (Stamps his feet, and leaning the gun against his side, swings his arms to get warm.) Feels as if my feet were off, clean gone like poor Dave's after the doctors fixed him. I hope those redcoats won't come to-night. I'm shaking so with the cold I couldn't hit them if each one was as big as Uncle Hiram's stone barn. I'd give my best pair of boots to crawl into that mow this very minute. And, say, while I'm

wishing, I'd like some of Aunt Hannah's pot-pie. I didn't know I was so hungry, but there's nothing to eat here. I only had a piece of hard bread these two days. (Silence for several minutes.) I'm shaking as if I had the ague. I'm limp, too. I'll just sit down a spell, for I could hear the horse hoofs better.

(Sits down and seems to listen. Finally leans over on one side, and slowly goes to sleep.)

(Enter Washington, R., wrapped in large military cloak. Stops at R. and looks around, listening. Finally speaks):

This is culpable neglect on the part of Major Richardson. At Headquarters this evening I gave him the orders for the night, and then detailed the location of the pickets, pointing out the great need of a loyal, intelligent man for this part of the line. To this I added the news brought in by the scouts an hour before who saw a squad of the enemy's horse near the Gulph. At all other points the men are on duty, though suffering from the cold, poor fellows. No, there is no picket on this road, just where one is most needed, for the lower fort is not near completed, the men being too weak to make much progress in digging. (Walks forward, and stumbles over the guard. Stoops down and feels the guard. Slowly rises, and stands thoughtfully. Looks at the fallen man and speaks very slowly.)

Thank God! *you* are not dead. Yonder field seems never satisfied, but every day opens its mouth to swallow more of my poor men. Or is it only sown with the seeds of patriotism? Shall the happy day dawn, when in this fair land of the West, upon which a



## WASHINGTON AT VALLEY FORGE.

kindly Providence hath smiled, men of a new nation shall stand upon this holy ground and feel that they are free men in a free land? will they mark these unnumbered graves in some noble way, and count these unnamed heroes the martyrs of Liberty? will they crown this hilltop with a temple of the Prince of Peace? 'Tis a fair dream for a dreary night! Perchance that picket is dreaming now,—dreaming of home, of father and of mother, or mayhap, of sweetheart. Dream while you can, for there will be stern enough work before the end is found. (Covers him with his cloak and taking his gun mounts guard.)

(Finally stands, leaning on the gun and peering at the sleeping sentinel).

Still dreaming? Happy man that thou art! "Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown." So wrote I many years ago after the copy set by good parson Campbell. Then I little recked how I should learn its sense. Not that I have attained to regal state. Nay, to that I do not aspire, and from me will I put the crown not as did Cæsar, each time less strongly, but each time more so. For me pomp and power have no enchantment. Only the crown of contentment do I crave. The robe of integrity charms my eyes more than the purple. With Mount Vernon no palace can compare, and thither I will return when once these stern times give place to peace, and I in honor may lay down the sword. I will be no Cæsar, as envious men imply, but rather a Cincinnatus. This cold doth make my teeth chatter, and so I talk like a silly girl. Or is it true that lack of food lightens the head? I cannot eat while others starve. My despatches kept me beyond the stated time, and so my dinner is helping homeward one who goes in answer to piteous appeal. And how could I sleep to-night? The army is clamoring for food. Congress is incompetent, and every hour the cause of freedom is deserted by those who are bribed by fair promises or British gold, or frightened by the spectre noose. The signal

instances of providential goodness, which we have experienced, convince me that the Author of all good destines to bless the sacred cause in which we are now engaged. Falter who will, I can but humbly follow now as I have in childhood, in youth and early manhood the leading of Divine Providence.

(Pause). The first gray streaks announce the dawn of day. Our dreamer must wake before the guard is relieved, or death will be the penalty.

(Stoops over him and takes his cloak again. The guard stirs and opens his eyes. Washington quietly walks off R.).

Guard—Why, it's near morning! How short the night has been. Why, I've been dreaming. I thought I was home. (Looks about, sees gun, starts to his feet and picks it up, and says very slowly): "Pickets shall be shot who fail to watch," and I,—I've slept,—slept on the picket line! Ah, me! I'm no soldier after all. What will Mercy think of me when I tell her that I slept at my post? And yet I thought she covered me with a warm blanket and said to dream of my sweetheart. (Stands thoughtfully.)

Reveille sounds.

Paces off L.

Curtain.

## SCENE II.

Same road. Morning.

Enter Pat—Indade, and it's a poor counthrie that I've cum to, afther lav-ing dear ould Ireland. In th could noights thir was mither's cow as I could slape near, or one uv th pigs. But nary a cow nor a pig can ye borry, beg nor stale in this dissert island. Nary a wun, nary a wun, fur I've thried ivery way.

Enter Joshua—Saay, saay—

(Pat turns and looks back.) That's just what I've bin doin. Do you think I kin use me tongue any faster on a could mornin loike this? Indade and ivery mornin I sez to meself, sez I, An Pat is yer tongue clane froze to th roof



of yer mouth? And it's a moighty comfort to find I kin still spake th rich brogue iv mither Ireland in the land of the fray and th home of the brave.

Josh—Saay, saay—

Pat—I tell ye, ye'll rack me narves all to bits if yer don't stop yer "saayin" to me. I can't stand it, I tell ye, nary a bit, nary a bit.

Josh—Waal, now, Pat, I never open me mouth without I saay somethin, and that's more than most men can saay.

(Enter Jack)—You two still at it, eh? First thing in the morning and last at night, and all through the day for variety. Why don't you go to breakfast?

Pat—What's that ye soy?

Josh—Saay, saay—

Pat—Ach, me ears! (Puts both hands to his ears and glares at Josh.)

Jack—Yes, there's a fine "menu" this morning, as those French fellows would say.

Pat—Indade, and I've seen no breakfast fur me and you, nor any ither fellow for these three days.

Josh—Saay, saay—

Pat (turning to Josh)—Oh, be quiet and let me hear meself think, will ye plaze?

Jack—I said "menu." That's the French for a bill of fare.

Pat—Indade, an I'd loike to be at Killarney Fair roight now, so I would.

Jack—Let me give you the bill of fare. First there is icicle soup a la Valley Forge, and then fried Schuylkill ice cakes, with snow dressing, and delicious Forge Creek chops that fairly melt in your mouth, and all the milk and cream you want from the large herd of the Commissary's pump-cows, and—

Pat—Don't say anither wurd. Me mouth is fairly watherin now, and I'm that thin with this American wather tratement that I kape me one button on me coat buttined fur fear I'll drap me ribs round th camp. Thank ye, ye kin kape me out of yer "me an you," and ye kin hav th whole breakfast yerself, with a pail of wather to boot.

(Enter drummer, L., followed by soldier with long pole in left hand, paper in right. Others follow. Steps to front and reads):

All good citizens, Greeting: Know ye by these presents, that on this 23d day of the month of February, in the year 1778, Anno Domino, and of the Declaration of Independence the second, we, the undersigned, being weak in mind and more so in body, do now offer for sale, and that publicly to the highest bidder, 8 good stomachs. Reason for sale, no further use for the same, the undersigned having joined the American army, and therefore having discontinued the business of eating. Also, at the same place and time, and under the same conditions, 16 good sets of teeth, 8 upper and 8 lower, for the same reasons, as mentioned aforetime. Come one, come all, to Col. Lamb's artillery this morning at 10 by the clock. Terms cash. N. B.—Take Notice, No Continental currency will be received, as the undersigned, having determined to serve the country do not intend to establish a paper warehouse.

Signed and sealed, this 23d day of February, near the Valley Forge:

Timothy Timpkins, Zedekiah Goodrich, Jonathan Whipper, Anthony Straggles, Hezekiah Pumpkin, Joshua Bilkins, Peter Peters, Asa Oliphant.

(Soldier moves to R. followed by others).

As they go along one says, Now, boys, three cheers for the Commissary! Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

Pat—An the byes will hav their little fun, even if they've nary a thing to ate and not much more to wear.

Jack—That's so. It is wonderful in what good spirits they are. Even the General remarks it, and in his last despatches to Congress he spoke of it.

(Enter another soldier running, followed by others).

News! news! Have you heard the news? The honorable, the Continental Congress, in recognition of the great bravery and the splendid achievements of the American army in running away



from the British on divers and many occasions have voted a pound of soap to each and every soldier! Hurrah!

(Others following, shouting hurrah).

Pat—A pound of soap? Indade, an I'll niver ate thot, nivr a bit.

Jack—It's a medal, Pat. It's not to eat, only to look at.

Pat—A meddle? An shure, I guess ye're roight this toime, fur I did hear tell how that th Congressh was iver a meddlin with our George Washington, Hivin bless him! a sending cummaytees and cummaytees. but niver a thing to ate. Now, I don't want any meddle from thim nor any ither body. It's a soap meddle this time, is it? Indade, an I'd loike to tell thim what I think uv thim, I would. A soap meddle?

Jack—Well, Pat, you're like every other man in camp,—true as steel to our good General. But I must find an axe and try to help build our hut, for it looks as if this army would not be hutted this winter. Good-bye.

Pat—If it's a tongue to ax for somethin to ate, I kin give ye th loan uv one, I kin.

(Jack goes off laughing.)

Josh—Saay, saay—

Pat—Well, what will ye hav me "saay," ye Yankee!

Josh—Saay, let's cook somethin.

Pat—Now, ye're talkin, me bye. But ye'll hav to tell me what to cook, ye will, fur it's a long toime since I've laid me blue eyes on anything uv that sort.

Josh—Saay, there's mighty powerful strength in a stone, they saay. Let's cook some.

Pat—Ye're roight ther is, but I nivr heard how to git it out, hev I.

Josh—Saay, let's boil some.

Pat—You're not as dumb as ye look, are ye? It's a foine thought ye found in that head of yourn. I'll get the pot. Ye git th wather and th wood.

(Exit R. and L.).

(Pat comes back with big iron pot, and Joshua with bucket and wood.)

Pat—Now, we'll show th ither soldjer lads how to git shtrong. It's mighty quare that none uv thim thought uv this

before, seeing th plenthy uv shtones there is. Hurry up, me lad, fur I'm jist a hungrin fur some of that biled shtone. I'm that weak I am that me mither in ould Ireland would niver reckognize her angel Pat.

(Josh puts wood under pot, then says):

Saay, have ye a flint?

Pat—Indade a flint and steal a'ways go together in me moind, so I kape a flint in me pocket for good luck and ould Ireland's sake. (Pours water into pot while Josh makes fire, blowing it.)

Pat (dancing round)—Now we're th cooks, we air.

Josh—Saay, now we must get th stones.

Pat—Indade we must. Let's get good and sthrong ones. (Both come back bearing big stones, which they drop in the pot.)

Pat—How long do ye bile thim?

Josh—Saay, an egg is boiled hard after three minutes.

Pat—Be careful, thin, fur these wer as hard as hard to begin with. I'll thry thim. (Pokes them with a stick.) Hard as a shtone, as he sayin is.

Josh—Saay, maybe it's th soup that's strong. Bones don't boil soft, but th soup's good.

Pat—Ye're bright fur a Yankee. I'll thry it, for I'm that hungry I kin hardly wait. (Takes spoon out of pocket.) A Swedes' Ford keepsake. I found it where somebody'll miss it. (Tries to cool it by blowing on it, and tastes it.) It's roight weak soup, this is—as weak as wather.

Enter Officer, L.—Well, boys, what are you cooking?

Pat (saluting, and hurriedly putting the spoon behind him)—Shtones, surr!

Officer—Stones, stones?

Pat—Indade, they say there's a heap strength in a shtone, and we're thrying to get some out.

Officer (laughing)—Well, you're the biggest dunces I have found yet. Put out that fire and report for dress parade.

Boiling stones! Poor fellows! Ne-



cessity may be the mother of invention, but if so some of her children are not as bright as others. Boiling stones! I'll have something to tell at Headquarters to-night. Goes off R.

(The ragged guard marches on the stage and drills.)

(At the command, "Break ranks," the soldiers group themselves carelessly. One sings the first line of the following song, two or three join in the second line, and more in the third, the whole squad singing the fourth line and the rest of the song, War and Washington, a favorite at Valley Forge in '77 and '78. Reprinted from a broadside.)

## A

## New SONG.

*To the Tune of the British GRENADIERS.*

VAIN BRITTONS, boast no longer with  
proud Indignity,  
By Land—your conqu'ring Legions—  
your matchless Strength at Sea!  
Since WE your braver Sons, incens'd,  
our Swords have girded on,  
Huzza, Huzza, Huzza, Huzza, for WAR  
and WASHINGTON!

Urg'd on by North and Vengeance,  
these valiant Champions came,  
And bellowing TEA and TREASON!  
and GEORGE was all on Flame!  
But sacriligious as it seems—we  
REBELS still live on—  
And laugh at all your empty Puffs, and  
so does WASHINGTON!

Still deaf to mild Intreaties—still blind  
to England's Good,  
You have for Thirty Pieces—betray'd  
your Country's Blood;  
Like Æsop's greedy Cur, you'll gain a  
Shadow for your Bone,  
Yet find us fearful Shades, indeed, in-  
spir'd by WASHINGTON.

Mysterious! unexampled! incomprehensible!

The blundering Schemes of Britain,  
their Folly, Pride and Zeal!  
Like *Lions* how ye growl, and threat!  
meer *Asses* have ye shown,  
And ye shall share an *Ass's* Fate, and  
drudge for WASHINGTON!

Your dark, unfathom'd Councils—our  
weakest Heads defeat,  
Our Children rout your Armies—our  
Boats destroy your Fleet!  
And to compleat the dire Disgrace,  
coop'd up within a Town,  
You live the Scorn of all our Host! the  
Slaves of WASHINGTON!

Great Heav'n! is this the Nation—  
whose thund'ring Arms were hurl'd  
Thro' Europe, Afric, India? whose  
Navy rul'd a World?

The Lustre of your former Deeds—  
whole Ages of Renown—  
Lost! in a Moment—or transfer'd to  
US and WASHINGTON!

Yet think not Thirst of Glory—un-  
sheaths our vengeful Swords—  
To rend your Bands asunder—and cast  
away your Cords—  
'Tis Heav'n-born FREEDOM fires us  
all—and strengthens each brave  
Son—  
From him who humbly guides the  
Plough to god-like WASHING-  
TON!

For THIS—O could our Wishes—your  
ancient Rage inspire!  
Your Armies should be doubled—in  
Numbers, Force and Fire!  
Then might the glorious Conflict prove,  
which best deserv'd the Boon—  
AMERICA or ALBION—a GEORGE or  
WASHINGTON!

Fir'd with the great Idea — our  
Fathers' Shades would rise!  
To view the stern Contention—the  
Gods desert their Skies—



## WASHINGTON AT VALLEY FORGE.

And Wolfe, mid Hosts of Heroes, superior, bending down—  
Cry out, with eager Transport—Well done, brave WASHINGTON!

Should GEORGE, too choice of *Britons*  
—to foreign Realms apply—  
And madly arm half Europe—yet still we would defy  
Turk, Russian, Jew and Infidel, or all those Pow'rs in one—  
While HANCOCK crowns our Senate—our Camp great WASHINGTON.

Tho' warlike Weapons fail'd us—disdaining slavish Fears—  
To Swords we'd beat our Ploughshares—our Pruning-hooks to Spears—  
And rush all-des'prate! on our Foe! nor breathe, till Battle won;  
Then shout and shout, AMERICA! and conqu'ring WASHINGTON!

Proud France should view with Terror—and haughty Spain should fear—  
While ev'ry warlike Nation—would court Alliance here—  
And George, his Minions trembling round, dismounted from his Throne—  
Pay Homage to AMERICA and glorious WASHINGTON!  
Curtain.

## SCENE III.

Interior of Isaac Potts' farm house.

Large fireplace at C. Settle L. High clock, spinning wheel, etc.

Mrs. Potts sewing.

Isaac has been gone a long while. I fear he has had some trouble with the soldiery. There are some rough men among them, and they are so dirty, too. But they are goodhearted and willing to suffer anything for George Washington. How they do revere him! But I wish they could have more to eat, poor men. Many of them are dying from cold and starvation, and the smallpox is

worse every day, the doctors say. Isaac was saying that some of the neighbors are growing rich, they sell so much in Philadelphia these days and at such good prices. But it is dreadful to think of these poor men dying from the lack of food. (Pause.) I wish I was a man and did not belong to the Society. I know what I would do. (Pause.) What a foolish wish! For then I could not be Isaac's wife. (Pause.) I wish Isaac would come back soon, for I have a surprise for him, some of those hot biscuits which he likes. He always says that they taste better when I make them, and yet I have taught Hannah to make them just as I do. I even have her use the same measure for the flour, so she will not make them too stiff. It is growing dark, too. I hope nothing has happened. (Sews quietly. Starts and listens.) He is coming. How I do like to hear his step. He is coming in now, and I am so happy.

Isaac—I fear thee has been worrying again about thy Isaac. These soldiers will not hurt me, little one.

Martha—It was growing dark, and I suppose I thought the time longer than it was. Thee was away, thee knows, and the clock that David Rittenhouse made does seem to tick slower when thee is not in the house, although thee only smiles when I tell thee about it. (Isaac takes out his watch and looks up at the clock, smiling.) I am glad thee has come. Thy supper will soon be ready. I will tell Hannah thee is here. (Exit.)

(Isaac stands looking at the fire, and slowly takes off hat and coat.)

Martha (entering)—Is thee very cold, Isaac?

Isaac—Yes, but devoutly happy. I have seen a wonderful sight, which kept me spellbound in the snow. But I'd stood hours in the snow to have seen it.

Martha—Oh, tell me. Thee says I am curious, Isaac, and thee does make me curious. Do not keep thy wife in wonderment.

Isaac—Let us sit down on the settle.



I had gone to the forge to see that the men were doing the work which George Washington wants for his cannon. Rather strange work for a Friend, seeing the Society so opposes war, but I am glad to do it for him, for he is a good, devout, religious man.

Martha—I am glad to hear thee say so, Isaac.

Isaac—Then I walked down Forge Creek to the mill. We must grind all night now, for some of the farmers have sold their grain for the use of the soldiers, and they need it ground at once to keep them alive. John and his boy will grind to-night. I then went to George's headquarters to tell him what I would do, but he was not there. I saw his wife, Martha, who came from Mount Vernon yesterday forenoon to spend the winter with George, and I left my message with her.

Martha—Is she a good woman, too? is she beautiful, as they say she is? does thee remember what she wore?

Isaac—Which of this string of question shall I take first? Certainly not the last, for we Friends do not consider the outer raiment, the wearing of gold and the plaiting of the hair, but the inner man of the heart. But I did note that she was plainly, but well dressed in the style of the day. Some people would count her beautiful, but then she is not near as beautiful as thee is. Thee is blushing, I do say.

Martha—Thee is a tease, Isaac! But tell me what was the wonderful sight, for I will see Martha to-morrow morning with mine own eyes. She is now our neighbor, and she may be in the need of something. I must see if I can help her. I have feared George was not as comfortable as he might be.

Isaac (smiling)—Then thee will be able to tell me how she was dressed, even to the last ruff. But I will now tell thee of the sight. I went across the hill, following the line which the engineers have marked out part of the way to neighbor Stephens'. Going through the grove near the road I heard a solemn voice. I paid not much

heed to it, voices being no rarity these days, until I came to the copse where thee remembers the greenbrier and grape grow so thick, and where thee always wants to stop in winter in hope of seeing the bright red-birds which live there safe from the cold. Through the opening I saw the speaker, although he saw me not, for his eyes were heavenward turned, and he faced toward the camp. It was George Washington. He was kneeling on the ground, as do the Church of England people when they pray, and as we read the Master did in the garden. Never in Meeting did thee or I ever hear such a prayer as that. He was asking God to guide him and to help him lead the people to peace and godliness. (Pause.) Never before hath the Spirit seemed so close to me. George is a man of war, but he is a man of God. As I walked home I thought how even the great Lawgiver was also a fighting man, and yet God was with him. (Another longer pause.) Yes, George will lead this people to peace and godliness, for he is another Enoch,—another friend of God.

Martha—Oh, I am so glad to hear thee say so! (Silence.)

Enter Hannah—Tea is waiting for thee.

Martha—Then let us go, Isaac, for I know thee must be hungry.

(Exeunt.)

Curtain.

#### SCENE IV.

The front room in Washington's headquarters.

A quilting frame in place.

Mrs. Henry Knox enters in a distracted manner.

Mrs. Knox—Here I am, flustered again. Why will I be so? Papa thought it would be such an excellent thing to have me spend a few years at "Miss Prim's Polishing Institute for Young Ladies," which was patronized by the elite of Boston. And dear old Miss Prim did try. How many times



she would say, "Now, Miss Flucker, ladies are never flustered." She always said it with such a hurt air that I was often good for a long time afterwards,—sometimes nearly a full ten minutes. And then that horrid little minx, Dorothy Adams, would write what she called a syllogism like this:

Ladies are never flustered.

Lucy Flucker is flustered.

Therefore Lucy Flucker is not a lady.

I hate syllogisms. Aunt Priscilla said she supposed I was too large to fit Miss Prim's moulds, and that some of me was always left out of the polishing process. (Sits near C.)

And it was so provoking! I don't mean about the polishing, but about being flustered. Lady Washington had been so kind as to invite me to the quilting this afternoon, and I made Julia fix my hair at ten o'clock so as to be ready in time. (Rises and walks to mirror.) Then to think what I did! If it wouldn't make my eyes so red I'd cry, I am that provoked. To think that I should forget my name! And of all times and of all places in which to do it! (Returns to chair.)

When I came in Lady Washington was standing in the front room talking with a group of officers, and Marquis Lafayette was making some of his pretty speeches. I waited for Lady Washington to turn around to see me, as no one noticed my entrance. What the Marquis was saying was so interesting and his accent so beautifully Frenchy that I forgot all about myself. Then Lady Washington turned around and looking at me said: "Ah, gentlemen, Mrs. Knox has arrived, and it is an honor to present you to her." I thought that was beautifully said, and her hair was so becomingly arranged, and she smiled so sweetly, and courtesied too pretty for anything, and I was wondering if I ever could be like her. And I actually forgot I was Mrs. Knox! It was awful! There I stood looking around the room and out into the hall

waiting for her to appear, and thinking how very rude it was in her to make no reply to that nice speech, and to keep the gentlemen waiting so. And then to make it worse his Excellency came from his room, around that funny passage, so that he saw it all. Everything was so still I could hear my heart beat. I don't know how long we stood that way. It couldn't have been as long as an hour, but it was a long, long time. Then Lady Washington stepped toward me, and taking my hand in hers said softly: "My dear, I welcome you to our humble quarters. Your husband, our esteemed friend, General Knox, has a warm place in our hearts, and we will be happy to have his beloved wife find there is room for her, too. Is it not so, Marquis?"

I was so flustered that all I could do was to bend my head to hide my confusion, and I trembled like Pete the canary when Tom the old black cat caught him. Lady Washington and the Marquis were just too sweet for anything. They went on talking as if nothing had happened, and then Lady Washington said: "Gentlemen, I must be very cruel to-day and take Mrs. Knox from you. She and I have work awaiting us upstairs, for we are planning for the comfort of our faithful soldiers." So I made my escape, or rather she made it for me.

Oh, it was dreadful! To think that I actually forgot that I was Mrs. Knox! Well, it is hard to be called one thing for nineteen years and then to have it all changed in a minute and then have to be called something else. And I don't see how I can help forgetting it. But to think of forgetting it, after I had been so careful to practice it. I don't know how many times I have introduced myself to every chair in our long parlor at home. Why, I even began it as soon as I thought Harry,—I mean General Knox,—seemed to be fond of me. Once papa caught me practicing it and there was a terrible scene, for he was a staunch Tory. (Rises.) Oh, to think that I forgot my



name! Lucy Flucker, I mean Mrs. Knox, how could you do it?

(Enter Lady Washington, R.)—All alone? I beg your pardon for such lack of courtesy to my most welcome guest.

Mrs. Knox—Oh, Lady Washington, it was perfectly awful! It is I who must beg pardon. To think that I should disgrace you. Oh, what shall I do?

Lady Washington—There, my dear (taking her hands), do not worry. It was not near as bad as you make it out. Indeed, I thank you for coming to us a bride and doing as brides do. You know I have twice been a bride.

Mrs. Knox—But then you were never as idiotic as I am. Mother used to say it was such a relief to her to know my head was well fastened to my shoulders, although Cousin Tom would add, spitefully, there were occasions when the other state was to be preferred, since the head contained a tongue. If you were a bride a hundred times you would always remember your name; you are so calm and dignified. I wish I was like you.

Lady Washington—What, honey, so tired of the first love already, and only three weeks married?

Mrs. Knox—Oh, I didn't mean that. I could love no one but Harry, even if I did forget his name was mine. Oh, it was dreadful!

Lady Washington—There, there, poor child. Let me tell you something which will comfort you. When I left you at the foot of the stairway I stepped into the General's room to see that it was comfortable. He was alone and his eyes were full of laughter. It seems he saw it all, and teasingly he said, "Martha, do you remember?"

Mrs. Knox—Oh, and you forgot, too! How perfectly splendid!

Lady Washington—Yes, child, and I remember it all as if it were yesterday, for it was too much for even the dignity of my most dignified husband. It was a sore subject with me for some time, but I can laugh about

it now. I do hope my laughter did not wound your feelings.

(Mrs. Knox shakes her head no, and looks interested).

The bow has been too tense these many days, and it was good to have those brief minutes of relaxation. George seemed so worn and pale to-day. Bishop says it was nearly dawn this morning when he went to bed, and he came in almost frozen. Then a despatch came from our old friend, Patrick Henry. Old Dinah came running to me saying, "Mars. George clean stark mad! a talkin to himself and sayin 'Gwon way, gwon way,' so I dun gwon fast as dese old heels would let me." I do not know what made her say so, for he was at work on his despatches, as calm as ever, when I entered the room, and I told Dinah not to frighten me again with her foolishness. So you see what a good angel you are, my dear?

Mrs. Knox—Oh, do tell me about forgetting? where was it? how did it happen?

Lady Washington—What a question box you are? Ah, there come the ladies. I will present you. You are Mrs. Knox, you know, a happy bride and a ray of sunshine for the dark day. (Aside.) Could it be "Conway?" It would sound like "gwon way."

(Enter Mrs. Wayne, Mrs. Potts, Mrs. Lamb, Mrs. Smallwood, Mrs. Poor and Mrs. Huntington, also Mrs. Squeezem and the Misses Squeezem).

Lady Washington (speaking to each as she enters)—This promises fair for our work to-day. And here is loyal 'Squire Squeezem's wife, too. This is most gratifying.

Mrs. Squeezem—Yes, and I brought my gals, the belles of the Schuylkill Valley, as Mr. Chopper, the butcher, insists on calling them. Imogene and Ambrozene, Lady Washington. (Girls courtesy.) They are twins.

Lady Washington (advancing toward front)—Ladies, allow me to present our new workers, Mrs. Knox, Mrs. Squeezem and the Misses Squeezem.



Mrs. Squeezem (In very audible whisper)—They are not "Mrs." yet, but they will be soon, or my name is not Susanna Squeezem.

The twins—Ma!

Mrs. Wayne (approaching Mrs. Knox)—Sweetheart told me you had come, and I have so wanted to ride over to see you. But the children have the measles, and between nursing them and catering for our very large official family, I have been kept close at home. Fortunately, my cousin, Mary Tomlinson, came this morning, and now I will be free to pay my respects to the bride of our honored friend. How glad I am to welcome you to Valley Forge. Your fame has preceded you, for you have a most gallant knight for a husband.

Mrs. Knox—You are very kind. I am sure I will be most happy here. Do tell me about the children. Are they so bad?

Mrs. Wayne—Dr. Otto says he never treated more stubborn cases. The old adage of a white winter has failed this year.

Mrs. Knox—Oh, you must let me come and help you nurse them.

Mrs. Wayne—That is very kind of you to offer, but you may rue the day. (Looking around.) As usual our work is awaiting us. What a wonderful manager Lady Washington is. (Both turn aside toward the work. Mrs. Wayne begins to quilt, Mrs. Knox stands watching, both talking. Others work also.)

Lady Washington (who has been moving from place to place speaking with the others, comes up to Mrs. Squeezem)—Which will the young ladies prefer? sewing or knitting? There is much to be done of both.

Mrs. Squeezem—Why they are real ladies, ma'am. As I tell the 'Squire I intend they shall be an ornament to society. Why, you'll hardly believe it, but I've never even let them comb their hair. I tell you, I've tried to make ladies out of them gals.

Lady Washington—Do you mean to tell me you have taught them nothing useful?

Mrs. Squeezem—No, ma'am. They're to be ladies. The 'Squire's well enough fixed to support them, as I have told him many a time.

Lady Washington—Then let me tell you that ignorance and idleness are not the fitting endowments for ladies. Mrs. Squeezem, the noblest lady in all the Colonies, is my husband's mother, Mary Washington, and there is nothing she cannot do in the house, or field either, for that matter, and she would adorn any court in Europe. I have no patience with such false ideas of life. All honest industry is an accomplishment, much more to my mind than strumming on the spinet or stumbling through French novels.

Mrs. Squeezem—Yes'm, Imogene can play the spinet. She plays "Anna and Laura" with only one finger.

Imogene—Ma, you mean "Annie Laurie."

Mrs. Squeezem—Oh, well, it's all the same tune.

Lady Washington—Take my advice, Mrs. Squeezem. Give your daughters such honest accomplishments as will make them capable housekeepers. (Lady Washington turns away to ladies.)

Mrs. Squeezem—Yes'm. (Stands looking dazed.) Yes'm, I'll speak to the 'Squire about it. (Three stand looking at each other and around absently.)

Mrs. Wayne (coming across the stage approaches the group)—What, not at work yet?

Mrs. Squeezem—Well, I'm that clean done for I don't know what to do.

Mrs. Wayne—Are you ill?

Mrs. Squeezem—No'm. Yes'm. No'm. Yes'm. No'm—

Mrs. Wayne—Why, what is the matter? pray tell me.

Mrs. Squeezem—Oh, it's the ejillations of Lady Washington!



The Twins—Ma, you mean ejaculations.

Mrs. Squeezem—I always know it's either Jack or Jill, but for the life of me I never can tell whether it's the boy or the girl. Yes, ejackulations.

Mrs. Wayne—The ejaculations of Lady Washington? This is most incomprehensible. Pray, explain yourself.

Mrs. Squeezem—She says ladies ought to work—*work*, mind you; did you ever hear the equal of that? It just took my breath the way she talked to me,—*me*, 'Squire Squeezem's wife.

Mrs. Wayne—I am sure that whatever Lady Washington said was fully justified by the circumstances. (Passes on.)

Mrs. Squeezem—Du tell! and me the wife of 'Squire Squeezem and the mother of these lovely Schuylkill Valley twins! Du tell!

Mrs. Knox (leaving the quilting frame she picks up hanks of wool and approaches Mrs. Squeezem and daughters)—We must not be the only drones in this busy hive. At least we can wind this wool. I think that is great fun.

Mrs. Squeezem—That depends. Now these twins here, they never wanted to wind a bit, and now I can't use the wool fast enough to suit them. They're always sending to Filadelfy, I mean Lancaster, for more wool. I guess the young gentlemen's arms must get dreadful stiff like.

The Twins—Ma!

Mrs. Squeezem—Well, 'twas the same when I was young. How the 'Squire,—he wasn't the 'Squire then,—how he would hold the yarn, and he seemed to like it better the more tangled it was. Now he says his rheumatics is too bad to hold yarn.

Enter Dolly Pendleton.

Mrs. Wayne—Here comes another helper. Dolly Pendleton, what has kept you? I thought you were coming early to-day?

Dolly—So I was, but Mr. Blackwell,

the chaplain, sent word that Col. Waterman was worse, and had asked for someone to sing. Poor man, the surgeons say there is not the slightest hope.

Lady Washington—Does he know that?

Dolly—Oh, yes. He asked me to see that his grave was marked so that his daughter could find it. You know none of the graves is marked. He wants "J. W." cut on a stone. One of the men has promised to do it, and I am to see that it is set up.

Mrs. Wayne—What did you sing?

Dolly—Oh, several pieces. He liked best Mr. Toplady's new piece, "Saviour, whom I fain would love," and the new Easter carol we are practicing to sing in St. David's, "Angels, roll the rock away."

Lady Washington—Are you too tired to sing for us, Dolly. We can work and listen, too, and some music would be enjoyable.

Dolly—Oh, not a bit of it. (Sings.) (Murmurs of approval).

Lady Washington—Thank you, my dear. It is such a pleasure to hear you.

Mrs. Wayne—And here comes Ruth, our army nurse. No bad news, I hope.

Ruth—No, far from it, all is well. Sergeant Rulison's wife has come, so I am off duty for a while. I wanted to see you all, for I think you have not heard the good news.

Several—What is it? Do tell us.

Ruth—A special messenger has brought word that Dr. Franklin is now assured that France will help us!

Lady Washington—God grant it!

Mrs. Wayne—That prayer needs no clerk at Valley Forge.

(Enter girl, excitedly. Rushes up to Mrs. Squeezem)—Oh, missus! oh, missus! the sojers has rested the 'Squire fur sellin' all those hefers to Filidelfy! (Bursts out crying. General consternation. The twins faint.) Mrs. Squeezem cries, "Oh! oh! I told him he'd be cotched. I told him so. Oh, my! Oh, my!"

Curtain.



(Few minutes later curtain rises. Room as before, but no one present).

Enter Mrs. Knox, reticule on left arm.)

Mrs. Knox—Where did I put my reticule? I know I brought it, for I had Harry's miniature in it, and my kercher, the new lace one, and some letters from Harry, and some sweets. I do hope I've not lost it. (Looks around. Stands looking at the quilting.) That quilting party was not as tame as I feared it would be. And to think that 'Squire Squeezem has been supplying the British with cattle, and all the time pretending to be loyal to Congress and such a friend of General Washington. How sorry I am for his wife and girls. (Picks up a sock.) I want to do something for the poor soldiers, something they really need. Oh, I know! I'll make each one a pretty red, white and blue watch fob of beads! How glad I am I thought of it. (Still looks for reticule.) Then I'm going to give something better than a quilting party. I'll show them what Lucy Flucker can do, oh, I mean Mrs. Knox. Where can my reticule be? (Raises her left hand to fix her hair, and the reticule strikes her face.) Well, all this search for nothing. To think I've had it all the time. I surely am in love, yes,—and with all the forgetting I propose to stay in the same happy state. But I'll show them something better than a quilting party or my name is not Lucy Flucker, oh, I mean Mrs. Knox! (Runs off R.)

## ACT II.

### SCENE I.

In the orchard near General Knox's Headquarters.

Grouped on the stage are General and Lady Washington, General and Mrs. Knox, General and Mrs. Wayne, Marquis Lafayette, Baron von Steuben, officers and ladies.

Washington—What a perfect day this is! The whole countryside is decked as if it would honor our generous French allies. The winter of struggle is followed by the spring of hope, an earnest of the summer of glorious fruition.

Mrs. Knox—The General and I are much honored by your Excellency's approval of our celebration of our alliance with France, and by the presence of so many of our distinguished friends. We trust our rustic entertainment will be a pleasure, even if it be not as grand as yours of yesterday. (Turning to Lafayette.) Marquis, we will need your gracious help to carry out our plans.

Lafayette (bowing)—Madam, your slightest wish shall be as my Sovereign's behest.

Mrs. Knox—That was graciously expressed. And Baron Steuben, you must first promise to close your eyes to my soldiers' shortcomings, for I am not a drillmaster, knowing none of those dreadful words, wherewith they tell me you make men drill; and secondly, I crave your help.

Baron von Steuben (with strong German accent)—You command, and I will march so straight as I can to do you—your,—ah!—vat ist it?—(murmur of "pleasure")—yah,—pleasure. Das ist recht.

Mrs. Knox—I greatly appreciate your courtesy, sir. And now, finally, your Excellency, I ask of you both forgiveness and aid: forgiveness for some pictures we may draw of America's most honored son, and aid to make them as near to life as ere can be.

General Washington—Both are freely granted to our dear Knox's fair bride. Where France and Prussia are so ready America shall be no laggard in service nor less gallant in courtesy.

Mrs. Knox (bowing)—I thank you, sir. With such rare good will and eager helpers, our gala will now begin. Yonder knoll will make a good point of vantage. Here our players will stand.



If his Excellency will lead the way,  
our guests will follow.

Exeunt R.  
Curtain.

SCENE II.

The same.

Mrs. Knox's Celebration of the French  
Alliance.

Tableaux, marches, music.

Finale, The crowning of Washington.  
March of the children of Valley Forge.

Tribute to Washington.

Chorus, "Hark the goddess of fame."

Chorus.

(One of the soldiers' songs. Re-  
printed from a broadside).

EXHORTATION

To the FREEMEN OF AMERICA.

*Aut Mors aut Vita decora.*

HARK! the goddess of fame,  
Fair LIBERTY'S dame,  
Has sounded her trumpet victorious;  
To AMERICANS all,  
She sounds her loud call,  
To rouse in a cause that is glorious.

For your Freedom and lives,  
Your children and wives,  
To defend is the time, now or never;  
Then tyrants oppose  
AMERICA'S foes,  
And live Freeman both now and for-  
ever.

Your Grandsires of old  
Were courageous and bold,  
By the smiles and blessings of Heav'n.  
Obtained this land,  
And by their command,  
To you as their heirs it was giv'n.

May Heaven inspire  
Their sons with their fire,  
For greater your dangers were never,  
And should trumpets' alarms  
Now sound you to arms,  
Be valiant your Rights to recover.

Future æra's of time  
Shall gratefully sing,  
To the praise of true patriot Sages,  
"AMERICA free  
"Forever shall be  
"Thro' all the vast volumes of ages."

Curtain.











